

SHIFTING GEAR

THE CHANGING MEANING OF WORK IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1920-1980

GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS

INTERVIEWEE: George Heywood

INTERVIEWER: Martha Norkunas

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TYPIST: Linda DeLisle

MN: Usually the way I start and although your case is very different from anybody else I'll interview, I thought I'd ask you a similar kind of question anyway. If you could tell me something about your family and their involvement with Gardner. Often the people I interview, their parents, or grandparents emigrated to Gardner so they have the immigration stories, but your case is obviously very different. But anyway, maybe, you could tell me a little bit instead of about the immigration story, which doesn't seem very relevant, you know, they've clearly been leaders in the community for what, how many generations?

Ms.H. Many, two generations before the founding of the company in 1826. Let me get a book. (all talking at once and difficult to transcribe)

MN: No, please feel free

MS.H. the Congregational Church, the Revolutionary War

MN: Sometimes it's the people in the background that provide sort of key triggers to the information. They'll say, don't you remember that was at such and such a time, and the other person says, oh yeah.

MS.H. When the town was first founded they all had to be, had to be connected with the church, and they paid their taxes to the church, and they had _____ and this was right after or during the revolution. And, George's ancestors _____ the founders _____ of the church. So that goes back more than five generations, and that's the company history, five, that goes way back.

MN: OK, that's it, what I know mostly about the Heywoods is just the company history. OK I've seen this but couldn't always follow it completely. It's the Heywood family, family tree.

GH: Yeah, (sighs) How far back do you want me to go? To when they came to Gardner?

MN: Well, was it something that you would have known as a member of the family, this kind of history?

GH: Yes

MN: I guess that's what I'm really interested in, what you would have grown up knowing about your family.

GH: One second while I. . .Is it on now (refers to tape recorder)

MN: Yes but I can turn it off if you want

GH: No, that's all-right. All-right, this is George H. Heywood, formerly chairman of the Board and President of Heywood Wakefield Company.

MN: Sometimes it's easier to go backwards, start with yourself and go backwards, but I. . .

GH: I can do the oldest one first if you want.

MN: OK, all right, yeah.

GH: The first member of my family to move to Gardner was Seth Heywood in, before the Revolutionary War. He did serve in the Revolutionary War and he is buried at the Crystal Lake Cemetery in Gardner. He had amont other children Benjamin Heywood, born in 1773, here in Gardner and he had the five sons that founded. . .

MN: Seth had the five sons that founded?

GH: No Benjamin did. Benjamin had the five sons that founded the company in 1826. They were Levi Heywood, the oldest, Benjamin Heywood, Walter Heywood, William Heywood, and Seth Heywood the youngest was born in 1812.

MN: Was your knowledge of them intertwined with the company. I mean could you separate your family from the Heywood Wakefield Company?

GH: Well in my direct line back to Seth, Seth Heywood, the youngest of the five founding brothers, they were all involved with the company. Seth Heywood, in my direct line, Seth Heywood had a son Henry Heywood who was born in 1936, and he was a president of the company and after his death in 1904, his widow, Martha Temple Heywood, founded the Henry Heywood Memorial Hospital in his memory because, he had many times said when he was president of the company that he thought it was unfortunate that the people of Gardner did not have a local hospital. He had a son, my grandfather, George H. Heywood who was born in 1862, who was treasurer of the company whey he died approximately at age 36 in 1898.

MN: At age 36?

GH: 36

MN: Oh, that's quite young.

GH: Well, he'd had, as I understand the story, he had had rheumatic fever as a child, which was I guess quite common in those days and he, he was up fishing with his wife, my grandmother, Ranglely Lakes in Maine and he died in his sleep. In fact I have upstairs at least one letter

GH: (con't) he wrote to his father a couple of days before he died when he was up fishing, telling about how they were getting along.

MN: Have you saved family correspondence?

GH: I have that letter from George H. Heywood to his father Henry Heywood.

MN: Because supposing you were interested in writing, could you write a story about your own family? Based on whatever material you have.

GH: Ah, Yes I, I suppose that I could, ah, Martha, but you know there would be, on some of these ancestors, I'd have to go by whatever I found in any old history books of not only Gardner but of Worcester County. There is some history to some of these people. In fact, I believe the, I may be inaccurate on this, I'd have to check it, but I think Henry Heywood went to Westminster Academy in Westminister, Ma. There's a hill in Westminster fairly near the cracker factory that's called Academy Hill. Well, there used to be like a preparatory school there. I think he went there. And my grandfather, the first in my direct line, the first of the family that, with a name like mine George H. Heywood, he went through the public school system here, through high school. The building no longer stands, it was on Chestnut Street. He graduated from MIT, and I have a picture of his graduating class, which numbered only something like 22 or 24 (chuckles). He studied mining engineering for some reason, and then he came into the company.

MN: Mining engineering?

GH: Mining engineering, yeah, I don't know why.

MN: Maybe he had other hopes or?

GH: No idea. My grandmother died in 1940 so, no way I can find out, no longer alive to ask. I guess they were like childhood sweethearts and they both grew up in Gardner. Married in 1886.

MN: Here in Gardner they married?

GH: Right here in Gardner, heah.

MN: So you would have known both of them anyway.

GH: No I didn't know my grandfather because he,

MN: Oh he died.

GH: He died, he died actually within two years of my father's birth. So my father really never knew his grandfather (he means his father) because he was I believe a little bit less than two years old when he died. I, I never saw him, but I did know my grandmother. So my grandfather was the George H. Heywood that I mentioned, the first one with exactly that name and he had a son, my father, also George H. Heywood who was born in 1896 and died in 1953 at the age of 57. My father was an engineer with the company and then I was the oldest child of my father and his wife and I was born in 1920.

MN: Did your father, and did you also go through the Gardner school system?

GH: My father went to Andover and Worcester Tech. I went to, through the Gardner school system, elementary grades, and I went also to Andover and then to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

MN: Isn't that a music school?

GH: No.

MN: No, I'm thinking of. . .

GH: Bowdoin College is a liberal arts college. It's, it's a college roughly the size of Amherst and Williams college.

MN: Were you a liberal arts major?

GH: Yes, I went to a liberal arts college, they did not offer any courses in business then, nor, as far as I know do they now. So ah, I graduated with a major in government and a minor in mathematics.

MN: Was it your father's intention that you should go into the business?

GH: It was my father's intention that I get as good an education as I possibly could and when I came out of Bowdoin College in, on an expedited program due to the war, in February of 1943, I went into the army and wound up in the tenth--- division which was the ski troops. And when I came out of the service my father asked me what I wanted to do for a living and I told him that I really didn't know what I wanted to do and so he said to me "Well why don't you try working at Heywood Wakefield for a while and see how you like it."

MN: So it wasn't a foregone conclusion that you would work at the company?

GH: No, but that's where I wound up. Once I got there I never left (chuckles).

MN: It's a logical choice.

GH: The same is true of my brother John who's 22 months younger than me.

MN: So as children even, would you have been familiar with the company?

GH: Not all that much, I was of course familiar with the company through my family, familiar with, you know, some of the products they had made in the past and some of the products they were making at that time. Actually I've gotten a little ahead of myself in the story because when I was in my junior year at Andover Phillips Academy, Andover, 1938 I worked at the company in the summertime, in the lumber yard, the entire summer. And the following year, the following summer after my graduation from Andover I worked in the lumberyard for another summer.

MN: The lumberyard here in Gardner?

GH: What's that?

MN: Where was the lumberyard?

GH: Right at the cor, right in the premises down there, right on the property. Ahhh.... Well actually where I, the lumberyard per se is a, between Central Street and Cross Street on the other side, on the south side of Central Street. But at that time the lumber came into the company and most of it came by railroad boxcars and it was unloaded on a siding between Central Street and Park Street where we had...

MN: I'm sorry go ahead

GH: (referring to his smoking) I quit last year and then I got started again. All right, talking about unloading lumber, there was a one story lumber unloading shed beside the railroad sput closest to the buildings between Cross and Park Street. It's now been torn down. But it had three unloading stations and there would be a four man crew unloading lumber, would be piled in the box cars solid and, and the leader of the four man crew would grade the lumber, tally it to copare what was shipped with the invoice.

MN: Grading, you mean judging it by quality?

GH: By the grade, you know like first and second selects, number one common, number two common, the regular number lumber grading, by the number grading rules. And then it would be slid, he would stand at the door of the car and there would be like a bar across the door and he'd put every board up there and he would have a grading tool you know, and he'd mark down on his tally, and every board would be graded as to length and quality and then it would slide over this bar into a man inside this lumber unloading shed and he would be building up piles of lumber with stickers in between each course in the pile, in preparation for it going into our dry kilns (pronounced kils). And, as the load built up, he'd push the button, the elevator would drop down so he's always stay at a constant level as he was building it up. You know to take the lumber from the rail car, as it was handed to him.

MN: And as it lowered on the elevator, would it go right into the dry kiln?

GH: Well no, as it was loaded on the elevator, he'd build a pile to a certain height, see with these stickers in between separating the boards by courses, and then when the load was up to a certain height, in other words the elevator was at the bottom, and you, you piled, built the load as high as it was possible to push into the dry kilns, then you would stop and he'd push the load down the railroad track and start, and build a new load on bunkers with wheels on them. The third summer I worked there was not 1940, in 1940 the next year my brother and I went to the CMTC Military Training Camp at Fort Devens which my father thought was, would be a good idea for us because he felt strongly that war was coming on. The next summer I again worked at the company.

MN: That would be 41?

GH: The summer of 41 (1941) in the department where we assembled railroad seating.

MN: Was there a reason that you were placed first in the lumber yard and later in the railroad seating?

GH: It was the jobs that were open, actually. I just took one of the jobs that was open for the summer. It wasn't with any particular plan. Then when I came out of the army, came out of the service, I went to work for the company and I worked first in the baby carriage department and ah...then I worked in the, in other departments of the metal working division which was still partially on war work, but we also made in addition to baby carriages and car seats, bus seats and school furniture.

MN: How long were you in the baby carriage department?

GH: Oh, I'd have to get my personnel records out if you want an accurate...

MN: No, no I don't want an accurate, just what you remember, a year, six months, three years.

GH: Probably six months or so. And then I...

MN: Would that have been on production?

GH: Actually I worked a limited amount of time on production but I also worked as a time clerk in the department. Yes, both production and time clerk. And then eventually I was made, after I'd worked in some of the other metal working departments, I was made an inspector, joined the inspector department inspecting products in process and final inspection before packing and shipping.

MN: What's a time keeper?

GH: Well, everyone punched a time card you know, between jobs and he'd have to you know, accumulate these time cards on a daily basis and make sure they were properly filled out as to what, exactly what part and what operation on the part each person did. And post the rate for one hundred of these items by operation and so forth and then these cards had to be turned into the payroll department.

MN: Oh so they were paid by what they call piece work, is that what they called it?

MN: That's right, piecework.

MN: But they would still punch in and punch out?

GH: Yes, you would punch in and punch out between different operations because there were different rates on every operation, you know. For example, there might be one rate for taking steel and cutting it to a certain length, there'd be another rate for you know punching holes in that part, another rate for bending the part, if it had to be bent, and so forth. There was a rate for every operation.

MN: Oh I thought that they would perform the same operation all day, but people changed in the course of one day?

GH: Well it depends on the run, I mean if the run was long enough they'd keep you working 8 hours doing the same thing, it could be that way. Or it could be, you'd do so many hours on this given operation and then you'd get through that load and then you'd get through that load and then you'd go to another job.

MN: Would someone tell them to change jobs or would they know?

GH: No, someone would, the foreman would have to tell them what to go to next, what to do next, what operation needed to be done next, that particular day. So the time cards were quite complex if the people were working on different operations. You know one operation for two hours another one for four hours, another one for two hours, you know.

MN: And would the clock itself have some way of indicating that they were working on this particular operation at this particular rate?

GH: They had to be filled out by hand, the cards filled out. Usually by pencil. But the cards would be preprinted with the department number on them and the employee's name and it might have the employee's identification number. But the operations had to be filled out on the card by hand, either by the employee or with the help of a clerk or the foreman in the department.

MN: I could imagine that there were, that you were constantly on the go seeing who was doing what at what time.

GH: Well that's right so. There was at times, you know, some work for the clerk, you know. Go in there at seven o'clock the next morning, pick up all the time cards from yesterday and go through them and make sure they were properly and completely filled out. Cause the time cards would go to the payroll department but we'd have to put the rates in. Have everything, all the information complete.

MN: And then you said you were moved to what department after that?

GH: Well I went in, I was in the inspection department for a number, for quite a period of time and...

MN: And there you'd have to receive some training on what was eligible to pass?

GH: Yeah, what was acceptable and what was not acceptable. And, some of these inspections would be made on the product in process and some would be final inspections of the completed product. And then I worked in the cost department of the metal working division. We had at that time a cost department for the metal working division and a cost department for the wood working division.

TAPE I, SIDE B

- MN: This is good because I, although I heard from some people exactly what they did, since you had many different kinds of jobs, you have such a different perspective on what each job entails. Could you, before you get to the next part, could you tell me what you did in the cost department?
- GH: Well, I did time study work, I brought in the plant with a stopwatch and a time study sheet and attempted to set the proper rate for the job.
- MN: Who would have designed the time study sheets?
- GH: I would have. The time study man would have the sheet.
- MN: So that would be some sort of outside consultant that you would hire?
- GH: No, no, no we would do it, we had our own time study department. It was part of the cost department. We had, we had, oh probably had at least four people, at least four people capable of going out in the plant and doing this. But I learned how to do it under the more experienced time study men who were there.
- MN: Could you explain a little how that worked?
- GH: Well, you would have a stopwatch and you would time the operation you know. The man would be standing here, here, and he'd take the stock from a flat or a wheeled truck and he'd put it in the press you know, and he'd stop on the pedal do the operation, take it off, and put it on another flat or truck. Or on some presses he might put it on, make one stop say for a punching operation, then that stop would fold out of the way and slight (?) the next stop and maybe you'd do two or three punching operations in the same press. You'd have to time it, and set a rate, of, a monetary rate of how much the company would pay this individual for this given operation.
- MN: and obviously he or she knew that you were standing there timing them.
- GH: That's right and it was a, it was a very ahh,,, high pressure and difficult job because the, the employee in many cases would try to take as long as possible to perform the operation and hoping that you would set a monetary rate on his slow rate of performance and if it, if you did that, when the rate was set, and assuming it wasn't protested, because we did have a union by then, then he'd, he'd work at a much faster pace, after the rate was set and he could make a lot more money.
- MN: But the timers knew it?
- GH: So they, but so many of the, I'm not saying all employees, but many of the employees would do this _____, you know you'd have to use

GH: (con't) your own judgment as to how much, you know this guy is really on purpose is slowing down here, and trying to get a rate based on his slow work effort and then once the rate's set you know, he'd work as fast as he could, you know to make much more money than he could make if he continued working at that slow pace. So, setting time study rates is a very inexact science. And ah, gradually industry is getting away from this practice. Because to some extent the employees control their own rate of pay. Because they can fool you in the setting of the rates. And sometimes be lined up in an adversarial position with these employees, you'd have to say, "Come on now, you're going slower than molasses and you know you can work much faster than this." Some of them just keep doing the same rate anyway.

MN: Were they. . .

GH: You'd have to make allowance for that in time study. Then you'd bring it back to the cost department, where the time study was a part of the cost department, and you'd compare it with other rates, you know, before you'd set the rate, try to make comparisons if you could with the rates that were properly set in the opinion of the manager of the cost department.

MN: Oh, with other rates for other operations? Or that same operation?

GH: Well, you could compare them with similar operations. They looked you know, this guy is really, he's not working anywhere near full capacity, you know, he's purposely dogging it at a very, working a very slow pace to try and get the rate set on his slow pace and if it's set on that slow pace, the rate's established based on that, then he'll really go to work, you know, and he'll earn a tremendous amount of money. More that should be the case because you're trying to be equitable for the whole plant, you know. Employees ability to earn money. But you can see I'm sure from where hopefully (unintelligible) my limited explanation that it was a very inexact science.

MN: How did you know that it was most efficient for say some men to take the piece of stock, put it through this one press and put it on the flat rather than taking the stock, putting it through this press, doing this and doing that, doing that and then putting it on the flat. I mean, how did you cut up the operation?

GH: Well, the foreman of the department, or the, one of the engineers in the metal working division, they would work out ahead of time, you know, the procedures for the operation. You, you were to do the operation this way. So my job was simply to time it and set a piece rate. I had some run-ins personally in the factory trying to do this. A few people said, oh you know, he's one of the Heywoods, he's, you know, trying to stick it to us, now, you know, watch out for him. But the (unintell.) the time study people were not, were not dearly loved out in the plant.

MN: I've heard that before (laughs) But I mean that's, you set up as you said in an adversarial relationship, what can you do, these people are under pressure from you. They must have felt pressure, didn't they?

- GH: Oh yeah, they felt pressure, but, you know, they also, they're not, you couldn't expect them to give, you know a real, in most cases they would not give you a real hard working performance, when you're time studying. They slow down.
- MN: It seems to me from what I've heard before that they, it was almost a sort of game as I think of driving, you know, and then how much the police when you're speeding will let you (unintell.) you'll go because people....
- GH: Well, that's correct.
- MN: Because people will say to me, ah, oh, you know the time study would come and he'd go, course you wouldn't work twice as fast as you could because you wanted to get a good rate. But they also would say to me, but the time study men knew what the real pace should be, so they had a sense that the time, it was obvious to them that the time study men knew that they were going slowly.
- GH: Well, that's right. So, ah, it was important to have experienced time study people out in the plants at any rates. When I first went out there as a neophyte, say in the first week or two, and the rates, I had one of the experienced guys with me.
- MN: So that could give you some clues, oh he's going to slow, he's going....
- GH: That's right. Going to slow, and as I say we'd go back to the cost department and we'd find similar operations you know. Maybe these operations, maybe they weren't still going on, because they were from the past, but everything was, see done on a time basis and then that got converted into money. But time would be uniform, right? Time was the same, one minute was the same, you know, 1946 or 7 as it was in 1922.
- MN: Yeah, the value of the dollar changes but not the value of the minute.
- GH: That's right. And then you'd transform it into money.
- MN: When, do you remember when the company, just to stay on this topic for a minute, when the company introduced the time study?
- GH: No, I don't.
- MN: Or why?
- GH: Well, I, I would guess that time studies probably were introduced you know sometime in the late 1800's, but I don't really know. I think it was done, it was done for a few, for several reasons. I would think that they started setting piece rates, for one in an effort to get better productivity.

MN: Because before that people would have worked for a day's pay rather than piece work?

GH: Yeah, you know it provided an incentive you know, for going to get paid so much for every one hundred of these, everything is set on a hundred, based on a hundred pieces, you're going to get paid a certain amount of money for every hundred pieces. That means you know, that you can do, do these, that operation faster you're going to, instead of earning that money in an hour you're going to earn that money in maybe 35 minutes or something. Also, I think another reason for it was in the old days you set up, you build up your costs, costs sheets based on these rates.

MN: How much it cost to produce a chair in the end?

GH: Yeah, it costs how much to do this, alright this operation does this part number so and so whatever, it is, you know, the cost you would show this part, show every operation that went on that part, and the same thing on every other part that went into say making a chair or baby carriage or piece of school furniture or a bus seat. And then you get, put them all together to get the finished item, cost of the finished item, based on these time studies. So it was a pretty complex thing, the cost department but I, I did get out in the factory for awhile and set rates. And like all the other time study men I was not very popular.

MN: Were you seen, not just in that job, but in, when you worked in the carriage department or even in the, the lumber yard, were you seen as a company man? Or different from the workers?

GH: Well, I had, except for the period when I was a time study man out in the plant, I, I got along, I would say, I got along well with the employees that worked there. But that was an adversarial relationship, that you know it wasn't my fault (the time study) It was the terrible, it was an awful job. Because you were really hated by some of the employees, here comes the time study guy, want to see if ye can put the boots to me, you know.

MN: I'm curious really to talk to some of the other long term time study people.

GH: Actually while we're on the subject, one of the, one of our best heads of a cost department is still living in Gardner.

MN: That's John Dumanoski.

GH: No, he worked there as a cost man, but the boss was Hugo Ostman.

MN: Hugo Ostman

GH: Yes, you'll find his name in the Telephone book. He's, I guess him probably 82 or something like that now.

MN: And he was then the head of the cost department?

GH: Yeah, he was. Eventually these two cost departments came together, under Hugo. You know, they molded the metal working and the wood working cost departments together into one eventually. But when I first worked there they were separate. So after I did time study work for awhile then I, then I did costing work, you know putting all these figures together on the costs sheets, to develop factory costs. Which would be materials, labor and factory overhead. Materials, labor, factory overhead. And the factory overhead was the percentage of labor like say 150%. So for example, if the labor was ten dollars the overhead would be fifteen, and then you draw a line, add those up, that would be factory cost.

MN: And the factory overhead would also take into account electricity, heat, things like that?

GH: Yes, that's right.

MN: And was it so obvious what operations went into produce what final product. I mean didn't they perform say when they were sorting the lumber in the beginning or in the lumber yard that would have been an operation that was applicable to not only bedroom suites but chairs and....

GH: Some of them were, that's right. At the head end, the front end, yeah, cause the, when the lumber would come in, you know as I described it, then would go into the dry kilns, and we had a man in charge of loading the dry kilns, we had thirty dry kilns, 10, 10 on each floor, 3 floors, come out of there when it was dry, he would test samples and so forth, get the moisture content down to, we used to between 6 and 7 percent. How long that would take would depend on whether the lumber coming in was practically dead green or whether it was air dried. If it was air dried probably the moisture content would be like 30% whereas dead green the moisture in the lumber would weight almost as much as the lumber itself. We would try to buy air dried lumber because it would tremendously cut down on the amount of time that the lumber had to sit in the dry kilns. Then the lumber would come out of the dry kilns and go into what would be called a tempering area. You'd let it, you didn't like the cut lumber hot unless you absolutely had to, like to have it cool off for like two or three days and the stresses from the heat work out of it, see, it's still stuck up on the kiln you know, with these stickers between the courses, and that is what was done in the area that's now the Boland Room, that was part of that tempering area, see.

MN: Oh.

GH: And then they would come into the cut off saws, you know that would be, you know, one of the early operations.

MN: And would they be cut to certain length requirements?

GH: Certain lengths and defects would be cut out. Yeah, we'd have anywhere from oh, probably 4 to 6 sawyers that did nothing but this.

MN: Four to six, sorry?

GH: Sawyers, cut off saw, saw operators.

MN: Sawyers, s-a-w-y-e-r-s?

GH: Yeah, and they would cut to the length and they would have a, they had a big chalk board, you know, a big blackboard up there and you know, and the man in charge of the cutoff operations, you know, he'd be constantly, as they cut this he'd wipe that one off the board and put another cut on. And you'd try to have a variety of cuts up there, because you know, the tree grows as God made it and the defects are very irregular. So you'd have, you'd try to get your long cuts first, cause they're the hardest to get, you know without the defects. And then you'd go to your next longest cut and then next shorter cut to that and then try to have a variety of short cuts as well as long cuts up on that board. So as to get the maximum usage of the good lumber.

MN: Would these people be trained in these early operations? I mean were these what you would call skilled laborers?

GH: Yes, ahh...they'd need, they'd need to be trained. And it'd be up to the foreman of the department to train them. It was a somewhat dangerous operation you know, get your hands out of the way (phone rings) (he answers it, tape is paused and then resumed) Well anyway, getting back to my career, I worked in the cost department for a year, probably a year and a half something like that, and then I worked as an assistant to the factory superintendant who at that time was a man named Bill Stearns.

MN: Was he the, factory superintendant, would he have been the superintendant of the entire company?

GH: Entire factory, we had other factories, you know, other places.

MN: Oh, right, ok, the Gardner factory.

GH: The Gardner superintendant. And ah, about that time also, I, the management of the company had me spend like a, two weeks a month in every department of the factory. See I had started off in the metal working, but a bigger part of the factory of course was the wood working. And I had had limited experience in the wood working division so I guess they saw that you know, there was some promise for me to work my way up at least to some extent in the company, so they gave me an opportunity to spend two weeks to a month in every department in the factory.

MN: While you were working under the superintendent?

GH: Yeah,

MN: Who's they, when you say they?

GH: Well the president of the company, I probably should say.

MN: Was that Richard Greenwood at the time?

GH: Yes, it was, Richard N. Greenwood, yes. Well I'm sure he approved of, although I didn't work directly for him at that time.

MN: And he would have been the, your uncle? How was it?

GH: Ah, he, he was actually my father-in-law. I married his oldest daughter, her second marriage. So he was really my father-in-law.

MN: So he wasn't....

GH: But that didn't happen until about 1950.

MN: He wasn't a blood relative then, but a, a _____ family?

GH: Well, way back, way back, yes, if you go back here to, if you go back to Benjamin Heywood the father of the five original brothers, he was descended from Levi Heywood where I'm descended from Seth Heywood. And Levi Heywood's daughter Helen R. Heywood married Alvin Greenwood and Alvin Greenwood had Levi Greenwood and Levi Greenwood had Richard Greenwood, and Richard Greenwood had an oldest daughter Mary who was my first wife. She passed away in 1961, so,

MN: So you were distant cousins?

GH: So my wife and I were married but way, you know, it was way way back we're related, I mean, but it was, it goes way back. So anyway, I worked in the power plant and I worked you name it, everywhere. All departments I'd never worked in previously I had a chance to, to, well actually it wasn't so much actually working in the departments as it was studying the operations, you know. I was, I was someone the department didn't, when this happened, that the department did not need me because I didn't have an assigned job in the department but I was put in every department for 2 or 3 to 4 weeks to learn exactly what went on in every department.

MN: And would you work _____ (the lumber)?

GH: Now when I was doing this if somebody needed help with time cards or something else, you know, I would do it. So that was a very interesting and rewarding experience because I got to see the whole operation, you know, everything in Gardner.

MN: And got to know the employees to some extent.

GH: That's right. So...

MN: What, do you know about what time this was, late 40's maybe?

- GH: Yeah, this would be in the late 40's yeah, yes. And then an came up in the sales department of the wood furniture division. So I went into the sales department in the office, in the third floor of the office, and I was like the lowest guy in the sales department, you know, sort of a sales clerk in the sales department, you know, learning the operations, and then I, a man that I understudied in the sales department but went out on the road for the company, that's how the opening occurred, and I worked under older and more experienced guys in the sales department who worked under the vice president general sales manager of the company. So then another man in the sales department left Gardner, stayed with the company but left Gardner, wound up eventually to be manager of our plant in Menominee, Michigan. So I took over his duties and in the process I got into product development, which was controlled by the sales department. A little bit into baby carriages, which was sold by the same sales force, but then in 1951, we got out of the baby carriage business because we could see what was happening was that there was not going to be the demand for these big carriages you know what was going to happen was that people were going to buy these strollers, especially the ones you can fold up and put in a, put in a back of a car, and we couldn't see that there was going to be the profitability in the product line going that way as compared with making big carriages, you know, that lots of them were not foldable.
- MN: So rather than change over your operation to small ones?
- GH: Well, we were making strollers too, but we weren't making the fold up ones. We'd make them so the handles would go down but the ones, you know, the ones you have today, you fold flat and just put them in no space at all.
- MN: The kind I use.
- GH: Ok. So, So I really was heavily in the product development of wood products. And as I got experience down there working under the sales manager, general sales manager and working with our staff designer, Joe Carr, who's still in town.
- MN: I looked for him but I never find him, Hes not in the telephone book.
- GH: Yes, he is.
- MN; He is?
- GH: W. Joseph Carr
- MN: C-A-R-R?
- GH: Yeah. He's still in town but he's not in position for you to interview him. (He's is not describing Joe Carr here) He's had many many shocks and he lives up on Pearl Street and he just lost two sons with cancer within about two weeks of each other, sad, sad situation and I, I don't know if he knows his sons died or not. He's had so many shocks he can't talk, but Frank Parish and Joe Carr ran what was called the experimental and development department. And I started working with them and the,

GH: (coo't) under the general sales manager _____ developing product lines which was very interesting work.

MN: Why was product lines, the development of product lines in the sales department?

GH: Well, it's exactly where they, where they're supposed to be, in the sales department, cause the sales department is responsible for selling, selling the products. So if ther're going to be responsible for selling the products they better make sure the products are properly designed, you know. Give the customer what they want.

MN: So the salesmen had input into the design of the products?

GH: Not the salesmen, the sales department. The salesmen we had, the salesmen would sell whatever we gave them to sell, but the products were developed under the supervision of the vice president and general sales manager.

MN: Would they get feedback from the retail stores or whatever?

GH: Oh yes, we would, we would occasionally consult salesmen and we would be seeing them at the markets. The markets in those days were Chicago and New York and Dallas was just getting started, and High Point (North Carolina) was very small then. Of course, High Point is the big gun today.

MN: That's in North Carolina?

GH: High Point, North Carolina, let me find his number here for you. What threw you off probably is W. Jososeph. W. J-O-S Carr.

MN: Ok. Ok.

GH: You want his address andthe telephonenumber?

MN: Please

GH: 116 Park Street

MN; OK

GH: 632-1553

MN: Oh great.

GH: You know where the swimming pool is outdoors?

MN: Sure

GH: Well just across the end of the swimming pool away from the indoor pool, across the Park Street, he's at the corner of Park and Graham Streets, but there's a big driveway that you just drive in. He has a studio, he still does design work for other people, principally S. Bent right now. So ah, so I started.....

TAPE 2, SIDE A

- GH: Or the company made rattan furniture. And, the war came on in the Pacific, there was, you could not get rattan, so Frank Parish I think he deserved most of the credit for it, but Joe Car was very involved too, I can't separate you know, who deserves more credit, maybe it's equal. They came up with this idea of making a similar product line but using solid ash dowels which we would bend in our bending room. We had a very extensive bending room, and ah, then we'd take a blow torch, a fine blow torch, and every oh, six or eight inches of so we'd go _____ to simulate the natural joints in rattan, and it was a very very successful product line.
- MN: And it was stronger than rattan, was it not. Or no?
- GH: Ah, I would say it probably was stronger because it was solid wood. Rattan, or bamboo you know, in the center its not much strength there, it's all in the shell on the outside. So I developed those lines for awhile. Every year we'd have a slightly different line and
- MN: Slightly different line?
- GH: Slightly different. You know you'd have to change the patterns a little bit every year like the chairs, I don't have a catalogue here to show you but we had tables ,
- MN: For what reason?
- GH: Because of the pressure in the market place for some, for the dealers coming into like Chicago, New York in those days, they're always looking for something new, something a little different. So you'd, you'd change it, make certain changes here and there you know. We'd have the top end of the line would have three dowels for an armrest and then you'd come down to less expensive lines a little bit with two dowels and you come down the basic line would have one dowel on the arm and that sort of thing
- MN: Dowel is the...
- GH: Is the round piece of ash you know. It would be steam bent like this (demonstrates with his own furniture) and come on down the front, like the leg in the front. And then I started to get into other solid wood products like Early American and we were making what was called Modern, M-O-D-E-R-N- furniture. The marketplace is always calling for something new, this was the bane of the company's existence in the wood furniture business. And then you bring something new, you've got to have all new piece rates you know. Employees are looking for new rates all the damn time see, they're looking for a chance to upgrade their pay by slowing down their time studying and so forth. So... and then I got into...
- MN: Oh so everytime ...
- GH: And then I got into pricing these lines. And then I got into buying

GH: (con't)the fabrics. In the early fifties I used to buy all the fabrics. We made full upholstered furniture both modern style and traditional and this Ashcraft line was largely seating pieces, although we had occasional tables too.

MN: You would make your own fabric or design your own fabric?

GH: Oh no we'd buy them, So I'd spend, oh I'd probably spend, two or three times a year I'd spend maybe five weeks at different intervals in New York, which is the center of the fabric market. And...

MN: And again how would you gauge what kind of design or colors were in fashion that year?

GH: Well, we would, we would subscribe to publications like Furniture Today which is a new one compared with those, with those days, Furniture Retailing, and they would run issues on what's new in fabrics every once in a while. And I would, I learned under a man who had been doing it before who went on to manage our plant in Michigan, Earl Lewis, who's deceased now. He took me on one fabric buying trip and from then on I was on my own. And you'd I used to subscribe to Vogue magazine. I remember that one time the President of the company asked me, "Is it necessary for the company to be giving you a subscription to Vogue magazine?" (Martha laughs) "What are you doing, looking at the pretty women in the book or what?" and I said "Yes, I think it is because the new colors and so forth start in women's fashion." Like I can remember one time when purple was coming on strong in Vogue, and I'd look at it every month. And I went to New York, sure enough maybe not the first trip but the next time I went down then I'd see some of these purple colors coming into upholstery fabrics. It would start that way. And then you'd have to have, I don't know, you got to have some kind of decent taste in fabrics and I guess luckily I had it because with the training that I got under the former guy and looking at Vogue, reading the publications, going to New York, then you'd say, well alright, what's new? And how is this selling? and who's buying this, in the South and so forth where the big furniture companies and more shows you know.

MN: Oh, because there might be regional differences too, in taste.

GH: Yeah, there could be, regional differences. We were selling nationally too. And yeah I could ask that question too, well what how, what's going on the West coast. There were years when I'd when we'd, this factory would buy a million dollars worth of fabrics at the suppliers cost.

MN: And that would have been fabric that you yourself chose?

GH: When I was the fabric buyer, that's right.

MN: That's a lot of responsibility.

GH: Yeah. It was an interesting job. I liked it. I liked it except, like for the ashcraft line that would be shown every year in October, Chicago and New York, when they have the outdoor and casual market, that is what it was called, a casual line, so I'd be down in New York for a good solid two weeks in August, you know what New York City's like in August. Anybody that's got any money doesn't stay in New York City in August unless the job really requires _____ suffering. Boiling hot, humid and everything else. But I enjoyed the work. You know you go in one show room, it'd be a nice showroom, air conditioned, very comfortable, then you go to another showroom, go out doors it'd be hotter than hell, then you'd go in another air conditioned. One time I got an awful sore throat down there, just from going, you know...

MN: In and out

GH: In and out, all this stuff. But I liked the job. So anyway then gradually kept moving up in the sales department.

MN: Was there, could I ask you a question about that, was there a conflict between designing things in some sort of standard traditional way that stayed constant, so people knew, oh, you can always get this kind of chair from the Heywood Company or versus, you know, always trying to innovate, little bit something new or modern?

GH: Well, in our, what was called our Old Colony Line, which was the Early American, first there was, when I first started to work it was made out of solid northern yellow birch like our modern lines, but then there came a, in the middle 50's there came a change in taste of finish and we, they, the market was asking for _____ customers, the retailers were asking, and the public was buying sort of what you might call a fruitwood finish. And then came the question. Should we. That was referred to as the Maple line, but we always made it out of yellow birch. And should we actually change to maple. So at that time that was going to be quite a big decision, you know. Another wood to handle in the whole operation. So we decided, and this proved to be a disaster, and I never recommend anyone doing this but the president of the company forced it upon me. Well I'm getting a little ahead of myself. So I came up, so I gradually, it was developing all the lines and some would be contemporary and some would be transitional, we were still making the modern, we were still making the old colony early American line and the ashcraft line. And I was then made assistant to the general sales manager. Now I've made assistant sales man - he was the general sales manager over all the operations the company had, not just Gardner, and ahh....

MN: But he was stationed in Gardner?

GH: So I was then his, I was then the number one guy under him eventually.

MN: Stationed in Gardner?

GH: Stationed in Gardner, he was too. Paul B. Posser, wonderful man. Then he came down with bone cancer so I was made the acting sales, general manager, and then a few months after he died, I was made the general sales manager of the company, of the company and a vice president of the company.

MN: How many vice presidents were there?

GH: At that time there were two. The other vice president was director of the company and a very capable lawyer in Boston. He lived near Quincy, I can't think of the twon right now, George L. Barnes. I was the only vice president actually full-time in the company. And now were getting back to your question on developing product lines, so then I was in charge, and then this question came up, about should we switch the old Colony maple line from using northern yellow birch to using northern hardrock maple.

MN: Why, were you having trouble getting the birch?

GH: No, that was not why it was, we, there was a lot of agitation that we could get a finish that would be more acceptable to the public on that line if we used maple instead of birch. Maple has more of a grain to it. Now see that, right now we've swung back to wood with more grain, you know like oak and so forth, but at that time that was not the case. The furniture business is a fashion business to some extent. So the president thought it would be a good idea if we had a committee of sales men. So we had a committee of sales men to give us advice on product development on the maple line. They had one for the modern one and then once the maple line, selected retailers to come to Gardner to give us advice what they thought about. The decision was finally made that it would be a good decision for us to switch to making the Old Colony, so called maple line actually out of maple, to get this effect on the finish that you could not get with the more grainy northern yellow birch wood. So we did that and that was a success. But then the salesmen and these customers started telling us how to, you know, they wanted this thing designed that thing designed that way and this thing designed this way and every salesman, you know, would have a slightly different idea or in the group there'd be one guy that would kind of dominate the other salesmen. He'd get, you know, he'd talk them into supporting his ideas. And certain retailers wanted certain things, like, I remember one in particular in Detroit, and, it was just driving me crazy, you know, and if you, if you develop your product lines based on quizzing every salesman, you got out there nationally, you know, you're going to get so many different damm answers that you don't know where you're at. So eventually we disbanded

- GH: (con't) that whole system of calling retailers and once in a great while some particular _____ we have and we always welcomed they're always welcome to come to the factory, but you give them to heavy a hand, you know, they're going to ask exactly what they want in the Detroit area maybe or what, the man in the store and his wife, what they personally prefer themselves, see.
- MN: But you would,,
- GH: Course somebody in Baltimore might want something else, you know,
- MN: But you would have a sense of what was selling in which stores, yes?
- GH: We would and of course we could see, we had, you know, very complete records on sales, what was selling and what wasn't, you know, we could pretty well tell at the market, you know, where you could talk to dealers. I like this, I'd like something more like this,,, sometimes we'd get ideas from them. But to set up a formalized system of their, in effect, dictating what you're going to be making, was a disaster. (interruption as phone rings) So we never did that again; God forbid, it was terrible.
- MN: What were you going to say before when you started to tell the story you said the president had made a decision to change something that you felt wasn't correct?
- GH: Well he wanted to set up these, set up these committees of sales men, and have salesmen bring in the leading retailers to tell us how to design the lines (phone rings again and there is an interruption) I'm very involved with the congregational church up here, I'm a trustee so, I'm up to here in it, you know, trustees meeting tonight. But go ahead, I'm sorry.
- MN: You said that they...
- GH: Well he, he thought this would be helpful to me, you know, new on the job. Well I wasn't really new cause I had been --- lines by myself anyway but the general sales manager had passed away and I had the job and you know, we're going to get more input from the field by assigning, let's say four salesmen or five to an Old Colony committee, and have them bring in, you know important retailers in thieir area to Gardner and have these meetings and you know, you just get so many different opinions about everything, and it was a very unreliable way to operate now. It's very important when designing products to have a very close touch with the market-place. But in my opinion that is not the way to do it. The way to do it is to, to either with selected salesmen or spend a, like a two or three days of a given week in their territory and go to the retailers place yourself, you know. Plus be out on the show-room floor at the markets when the, you know, when we're showing our goods in Chicago and New York in those days, now it would be high Point, Dallas, and you know working with the salesmen, meeting their customers, saying hello and hearing whatthecustomers think about a new line, hear any suggestions they have for any changes.

5MN: Because I-----

GH: But hearing it first hand. When I was salesmanager, well, when I was assistant and even before that when I was product development manager, I went to those markets, I never left the showroom all day.

MN: And who would come to buy or look at the furniture, not, not...

GH: Retailers, you know, important customers, retailers.

MN: Who would have their own stores, who would seel your furniture there?

GH: That's right, who would buy the furniture from us and in turn turn around and sell it you know, as Heywood-Wakefield furniture from R. Smith.

MN: But you didn't sell to just any retailers, did you?

GH: We left the distribution up to the salesman. However, we had very complete sales analysis records by territory, by state, by buying area, by city and so forth. And so instantly we could see so and so, how much Early American he was buying, how much modern and how much of this. And we had publications that would tell us, you know, who the big and important retailers were in the given territory. And you know, here's an account we're not selling, well why not? They've got a good credit rating. Get ahold of the salesman or on the telephone or bring him to Gardner or sit down with him at the market. At almost every market when I was the salesmanager, I would sit down with every salesman toward the end of the market when the traffic let up, you know, and before he went home have a talk with him, go over his sales analysis for the last year and "Why aren't you selling more of this? What are the problems? Why aren't you selling this account? and so forth. As close supervision as you could give them. But we did not tell them who to sell, we left it up to them. And if they, you know, didn't do the job then we'd get rid of them. But that didn't happen very often. We were very careful who we put out on the road. But I can say I have been fooled a few times, I hired salesmaen for quite a period of time, and... Quite often a young new salesman we would, we would bring them into the Chicago showroom under the showroom manager in Chicago who also had the, the central Chicago area sales territory-- he didn't have all of Illinois, but he had Chicago out about 30, 40, 50 miles or so and he was a very capable guy, and he would train these guys to work on the floor like a floor salesman because sometimes you get dealers come in off market, you know they'll bring a customer in to see your goods and this showroom was open -- everyday of the year. And remember one time he had a guy in

there, he was very high on him and I watched the guy during the markets and I interviewed him extensively and I talked to some of the customers in the area that he was servicing under the Chicago district manager and they all spoke well of him and I finally put him on the road in a territory out in the Middle West. A year and a half I had to take him off the job - he just wouldn't work. He'd work under the district manager but on his own he didn't have the motivation to work. Well that's a tricky job, hiring salesmen, cause you just don't -- they're out on their own and you know, they got to sink or swim. And if a guy's lazy and wants to chase women which this guy also liked to do, he didn't get the job done.

MN: Would you also have to worry about people stealing money?

GH: Ah, no because our money was, well, they had no access to money, they were paid straight commissions. Our salesmen were paid straight commission usually 6 percent of shipments into their territory.

MN: And would they decide the price, the (unintelligible) (manager?) price?

GH: Oh, no, no. We set the prices, that was part of the job in the sales department. We set prices on every, every item in every line.

MN: So if it went to San Francisco or if it went to Louisville Kentucky, it was....

GH: All the same price. The difference is the freight but the retailer pays that, very few retailers as for pyramid freight. We would do that if a retailer really needed -- insisted on doing it, we could estimate the freight, whether its rail, truck or whatever.

MN: And in those days it was rail, wasn't it? Still?

GH: To big customers, to big customers that could afford to order a carload at a time. A carload in those days I'm talking about would be, you know like 20,000 lb to 25 thousand dollars. You know, a smaller retailer wouldn't order that much. The west coast would go by rail. We had our own truck fleet here. We'd deliver out into Ohio by our own truck.. And we would charge them based on weight, you know. We had a cost for driving to Ohio, somuch per hundred pounds.

MN: So you sales must have been concentrated more on the east coast?

GH: Our biggest territory was the Midwest, our next biggest territory was, in size and volume was the Mid-Atlantic

our third biggest territory was the Northeast. Midwest was number one, Middle Atlantic number two, we're number three. Course they have more population in those areas than we have here.

MN: I guess transportation is a constant problem.

GH: Well, the problem, the transportation problem is not -- the ordinary license carriers, I'm talking about, you know, the tractor trailers, they don't like to carry furniture because they like to carry items that are heavier. And it is not a good idea to mix-number one they don't like it, number two-- it's dangerous to put even if a guy was willing to do it for a given run or something -- to mix in heavy stuff, you know, like machinery or whatever or rolls of paper or something in with furniture. If the load shifts, the heavy stuff's not going to get hurt -- the furniture's going to get smashed. But this was a good location for the shipping of furniture because there were enough of us in this area that there developed furniture specialists who concentrate on the furniture business.

MN: Trucking furniture business?

GH: Trucking firms that concentrate on the business, yeah. Like this New England outfit down on East Broadway, you know. And then there've been others, like F.T. Furniture Transport was a big outfit at one time. I don't know who the biggest are today because, you know, I'm out of it ten years now. But we did start, we built up our own fleet to go to certain areas, but this would only pay off Martha, if you made a return load, see. So...

MN: Return load of what?

GH: Of something coming back to the factory that we need. To send a truck out there full and come back empty was very costly. So we would go out to Ohio and we would pick up on the way back, pick up things, like they might swing up to Grand Rapids and pick up hardware for our casegoods handles and knobs and all that sort of thing and foam rubber and cotton and whatever.

MN: From your plant? Or from...

GH: Bring it., pick it up on the way home, swing around and get a load coming home, see. So we'd have a paying load coming back. This would save us paying somebody else to haul stuff, we'd do it in our own truck. So as long as you got a load coming back it was a good idea. The retailers loved it when we loaded it in our own truck, because our drivers would be more careful about the merchandise you know...

MN: And did you continue this system right up until the end?

GH: Yes.

MN: When did you switch then from rail to (unintelligible) trucks?

GH: Well, we did both, we were shipping by rail and by truck. Rail would be going to longer distances like the west coast, Texas. Rail is the least costly to the dealers but he'd have to commit himself to a bigger investment in our furniture. It doesn't make any sense to send the rail car half full. And then we'd you'd sometimes have what we called stopover cars -- they'd stop at this point, unload one third or one half the car then go on to another car. The least costly was (unintelligible). For one customer fill the rail car in Gardner and go right to that customer siding, or go to someplace that he would, some siding in his area where he'd send his truck to pick it up.

MN: If they could fill a whole truck versus filling a whole rail car, which was least expensive, a truck or a rail car?

GH: Rail car.

MN: And they must have been interested in your business also, the railroad?

GH: Oh, yes, you mean interested in buying the products of the company?

MN: Well, I mean the railroad must have been interested in delivering your products?

GH: Oh, yes, we had no trouble with the railroad. We were, in the 40's and the 50's some people in town used to bitch once in awhile, you know you'd -- quite often we would switch they'd come up from the station, you know, with the local, locomotive, the switching engine and pull, you know 5, 6, 7 cars up for us, you know they'd cross Central Street and stop all the traffic, right? Then they'd go up cross Park street and stop all the traffic, then they back into (unintelligible) stop all the traffic and I can remember hearing about some people who got really burned up about it. And I went and talked with a few of them and said, you know, you've got the wrong attitude, you know this -- why can't you do this some other time because we can't control the railroad, where they come up here, it depends on what other things they've got to do. You're holding up all this traffic at noontime. Said well, you out to be thankful that we are, cause this is bringing income to Gardner, providing jobs and income for the community. I know its an inconvenience and I'm sorry for it but

there's nothing we can do ----

END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A

BEGINNING TAPE 2, SIDE B

MN: Before we continue with your involvement in the company and your work there, I want to hop back to something we started with, which, I don't want to probe into your family secrets, or anything --

GH: That's all right, go ahead.

MN: But I was interested, since in this particular, first one anyway to talk a little bit about, also about your childhood and how involved you were with the community or did you feel separate, or integrated with other kids since you did go to the public schools for some time anyway.

GH: Yeah I went through the kindergarden and the eighth grade. Ah, well, let's see. One, two

MN: You were born in this house?

GH: No, I'm trying to think how many times I moved, One, two, three, four five. I've I've lived in Gard -- I was born in Boston, the Phillips House of Mass. General Hospital.

MN: Although your parents lived in Gardner?

GH: That's right. And I've -- I'm sixty-seven years old, I've moved five times in Gardner, all within one mile (laugh softly). So I've been here all my life.

MN: Is there something about the community that attracts you or keeps you here?

GH: Yeah, I like the community now. You know, and like all young people when I came out of college, especially after the service at times I thought you know this is a pretty small town kind of community, you know, compared with other things you could think about. Typical, you know, late teenage revolt. But I like the community, I've always lived here, I have no plans to leave the community. My wife says, likes to say to people well, "You know George, he'll never leave this house." Well, that's not really true but I, I you know, I've got friends in the community, good friends of long years standing and a lot of them used to work at the factory and -- I like the community. My brother moved, on the other hand, he moved on the Cape (Cape Cod), he wanted to live on the Cape but I have no desire to live on the Cape or anywhere else. So, I expect I'll be here the

rest of my life.

MN; How long have you been in this house?

GH; Ah, well, my father worked for the company when he was, got out of Worcester Tech after World War I. And then, the family, my side of the family, the direct line, owned Heywood Farm, which is where the college is. They owned all the way from the hospital all the way up to, to where those houses are beyond the athletic field up there. That was all Heywood Farm, both sides of the road and the woods way back. And they owned a pasture land up toward Winchendon on the left hand side. It's all looks like woods now, but it was a pasture land once. And the, the farm came into the family because my great grandfather, Henry Heywood that the hospital's named for, started by his widow, he married Martha Temple, and that had been the Temple Farm. And so the farm came into the family by Henry Heywood marrying Martha Temple. Now all the details of it, I mean what other children, Temple children there might have been I don't know, but I assume that's how it came in. So.

MN; And it was a working farm?

GH; It was a working farm. Well, in those days, I'm talking about like in the, in the late 1800's let's say up until 1922 it was, it was, it was a family farm. It supplied the family the milk, and vegetables, I understand the best esparagus, that you know, that were ever seen around here were grown up there, chickens and everything else. Henry Heywood died in 1904 and his widow I think Martha Temple died around I think 1914 approximately. And there's an unmarried daughter who ah, Helen Rebecca Heywood, who was very involved in the town, it was a town then, she was the forest warden for example. A lot of the trees that are planted around here she had charge of doing. And she died in 22. Then the question was, how're we going to dispose of this, what's going to happen to this property and my father had always loved animals so he, there was some settlement in the family the financial details of which I know nothing about, but anyway, he got the farm. And he increased it, the herd to make it a working dairy farm. And they had about 250 head of cattle. And milk was sold in the community here. And so ah, but it was very tough going in the thirties when he owned the farm. The price of milk was very low and he had a hard time really, making a living at it. And.

MN; But he was still involved in the furniture company?

GH; No he was not, he left the co, he left the furni, he left Heywood Wakefield about oh probably I don't know, 1923, 4 or 5, somewhere along there. My mother died 2 years ago so I'm guessing at some of these dates but..

And ah, then the state became, became, in the early days of becoming conscious of protecting the water supply. All those fields, when you fertilize them, they all slant down towards Crystal Lake (phone rings) I ah, this, my father sold the farm, he sold off all the animals.

MN: In the thirties?

GH: At auction. No -- we lived up there then, we lived up there, the farm, we didn't live here.

MN: Oh, so you were raised on the farm?

GH: So, most of my life I was raised on the farm, that's right. And ah, and the state put up the money to buy it. And you know of course, great concern today about environmental things and so forth. So he then bought this house, in 1937, so we moved from the farm down here. I was going to Andover at the time, you know, the preparatory school in Andover Mass. Phillips Academy, Andover. And ah, so we lived here from 37 until I got married the first time. Then I lived up on Woodland Avenue, 88 Woodland Avenue, the fourth house up on the left. And in 1955 my mother decided this house was too big for her alone and asked my brother and I if he had any interest in the house and by then he had built himself a house. So I said yes, I have definite interest in it and then we had to figure out you know, what's fair compensation to your mother for the house. And my suggestion would be, after considerable discussion, why don't we give the house to three or four realtors and see what price they can get for the house and I'll meet the highest price and bought the house for my mother. So I've been here since 19-- so I came back here and I lived here from 37 until I got married in 50 and then five years later mother sold the house to me and I came back here.

MN: So you had an emotional attachment to the house.

GH: Yeah, I like the house and I was living in a house much inferior to this one and fortunately for me I was you, know, moving up in the company and could afford to take on the mortgage and. So that's what I did.

MN: Did you mid that your father sold the farm?

GH: Yeah, I was, yeah, it was it was I felt, yeah I loved living up there, I like animals myself and he always had horses. And my father was a great horseman and he taught my mother how to ride and my father used to show horses like at the Springfield Exposition and so forth until he found out there was so much crookedness going on in this game. I don't mean race horses -- I'm talking about saddle horses you know. He taught my mother to ride side saddle you know like the way the

Queen of England usually rides and so forth. And I liked that I liked it better than my brother did. So it was an emotional thing when he sold the farm, yes I loved it up there. You know, we're out in the country, and yet we're not -- we're only about a mile from the, from the center of town up here, up town. And the fields were all in beautiful shape you know, and I used to work there every summer. For a long time he didn't-- he farmed with horses with draft horses because, he would never -- in the early days he would never buy a Fordsom tractor because, ah, they're a museum piece now, a fordsom tractor. They were built in such a way, and they had steel wheels in the back, that if you, for example were plowing, with like maybe four or five or six times, you know, a wide plow, doing a lot of (unintelligible) at the same time, and you hit a hell of a shoulder just under the surface, you know, the wheels on that tractor would keep going and the tractor -- the front of the tractor would come up like this and come right down over and it killed a lot of people. So I, I worked there, I'd go to school and I'd work when I got out of school, I'd drive a team of horses, and cut our own firewood and everything else. Eventually, when Farmall, International Harvester came out with a safe tractor he bought one, but he still had horses almost to the end, you know.

MN: And he would sell the produce?

GH: And sometimes he'd have a you know like to get the corn harvest in he'd rent a pair of oxen and I drove those. And one year, my next to last year at Andover, there there was a terrible infantile paralysis outbreak, and they put off the opening of Andover for a month. And ah, these things usually seemed to happen in the summertime or late summer, you know, in the old days before the Salk vaccine. So my father said, "well, Adnover isn't opening for another month, what do you want to do?" And I'd do odd jobs, drive a horse, one of the saddle horses, we broke him in to driving the hay rig and I'd do that. So he said, "Well we've got to get the corn in. He said, "You're not going to be going back for another month." he said. "How would you feel if I rented a pair of Holstein oxen and you could help get the corn harvest in?" So I did. I liked the life up there. But I also felt ..

MN: Would there be other people working?

GH: What, oh yes, yes there were houses up, where the railroad station, I mean where the radio station is there were three houses along there. And then further up above the farm on that old street, you know, by the back of the bleachers, that street that goes up there you know, the new highway goes off to the left. There are other houses too all belong to the farm, the people that worked on the farm all lived in those houses. They were owned by the farm.

MN; (Speaks over GH, cannot understand it)

GH; There were some people, there were some people who worked there who did not live there too.

MN; But they would have been local people probably.

GH; Yes, local, Gardner, Ashburnham or something around the area, yeah.

MN; Is your house still standing?

GH; No, ah, in the nineteen -- this was 37, 1940 in the summertime, my father warned the then mayor of Gardner his name was Perry, he came from Heywood-Wakefield, he was a knife grinder at Heywood-Wakefield, he's the one that built the city hall, he warned him that the people that were hanging up there were filling the barn, we had huge barns, probably as big as you ever saw in your life he warned them, and several of them, that they were putting wet hay into the barns and that the consequences would be a fire. You know, if you take, say you mow your lawn and you scrape up all that stuff and you put it in a pile you go out there in a couple of days and you stick your hand in the middle of that pile, it'll be hot. And that's what happened. August, 1940 the farm burned. The house did not burn but eventually the city used those for storage of you know, trucks and equipment for a while. Then they built their own sheds then the college went in, eventually. But that ramp up there you know that ramp? Well that went up to the to the third floor of the big barn and there was a fourth floor, too. So that ramp went up like that, I always liked the fact they left that there, then there was a bridge up to a higher level, that was the s(unintelligible), pull the hay into the barn. But yeah, I missed, moving from the farm but I felt very sorry for my father though, because financially it was just a, it was not working out well and he worked just man killer hours you know like get up at four in the morning - and the cows had to be milked twice a day, we had milking machines and we had the people to do it and everything but you know your day -- you work from four in the morning until 6 or 7 at night every just about every day of the year. You know, they got to be milked on Sunday, too. It's a tough life.

MN; Did He go back to Heywood Wakefield when he finished?

GH; So he went back to Heywood-Wakefield and worked as an engineer, yeah. He was in the service in World War II. He was gone for a little while and then came back.

MN; But you liked the life of a farmer better than (unintelligible)?

GH: I liked the life of the farm and I liked working out-doors, in all kinds of weather, but I, but I think it was a good thing for my father. I don't think he could have kept up that pace for ever and ever. It was very tough making any money, very tough.

MN: That's funny that he didn't want to go into becoming, into the administration of Heywood-Wakefield.

GH: Well, this opportunity to take over the farm came along and he always liked animals all his life and he thought this was an opportunity to grab. And I suppose he was probably sentimentally attached to the place too because he (unintelligible) since he was born. so, that's what he did.

MN: Yeah, because a lot of people in town remember it, they'll mention it to me, the Heywood Farm.

GH: Well, the old timers would remember it, oh yes. Cause it was sold to the state, the land was sold in 1937 so you'd have to get someone who'd worked for the company before that.

MN: There's a lot of people in town that spent their lives in the Heywood-Wakefield company.

GH: That's correct.

MN: And very often they would have had one or possibly two different kinds of jobs if not more. And I'm surprised, I guess because todays companies seem so mobile to me, I thought people would go in, you know as you did, move through the different operations, but they tended to stick too...

GH: They tended to stay, you know, they tended to stay where they started out. Now some of them like our foremen, almost all of them advanced from within the company. And you know we'd have a superintendent of the wood shop - the man I referred to, Stearns that I worked for, he was a general superintendent, we had a superintendent of the wood shop, we had a superintendent of the metal working division, which was referred to as the car seat division because of the railroad seating, and we had a superintendent of the baby carriage department. And almost all of these men, assistant, superintendent, almost all these people were, came up from within the company. It was seldom that we ever went outside of the company to hire anyone.

MN: And where would your labor force be drawn from?

GH: What'd you say?

MN: Where would the labor force come from? I mean in the early days you went down the Boston.

GH: Gardner, Gardner. We had some would come from Ashburnham, a few from like Greenville, New Hampshire, or something, but by and large they were Gardner, greater Gardner area. Baldwinville, Otter River, maybe a few from Westminster, Hubbardston. Mostly they're in Gardner.

MN: Any particular ethnic group?

GH: Heavily French, French-Canadian. A lot of them came down from New Brunswick and Quebec, so we had more French than anything else. We had a certain number of Irish, a certain number of Polish, a few Finnish, a few Swedish --- probably more French than anything else.

MN: So you might hear French spoken on any given day spoken in the company?

GH: Well, there were people there who could speak French but I cannot remember an occasion when we had to speak to someone in French. They had all learned enough English you know it might not be beautiful grammar, or beautiful speaking grammar, but you know they could converse, they could converse in English.

MN: Would there be more men than women? Must an impression I don't mean statistics.

GH: Yes, they'd be more men than women? But we had a lot of women too, in many many departments. And when (unintelligible) buying all those fabrics, you know, we had two stitching departments and they were almost entirely run by women.

MN: Were there any policies specifically towards women or about women?

GH: Ah (long pause), well, we tried, we tried, to to treat them job wise and compensation wise as well as a man. Now, in the stitching room, you know, with the sewing machines, you wouldn't find a you wouldn't find a man in there running a sewing machine. I think women are more adept at that kind of you know maneuverability of your fingers and so forth and it was you know, not a heavy dangerous job. We wouldn't have any men-women on the cut off saws or anything like that, but putting wood through a planer or through a four sided moulder which is commonly called a sticker, quite often that'd be, there'd be women on both ends of the machine, a women feeding the machine, a woman taking off. The set up, the set up people were all men, and the grinding of knives and all that sort of thing. Personally, when I got up high enough in the company I very much favored, particularly in the office, equal pay for men and women. And I had a bit of a hard time at one time. I remember one year, we used to, at the end of the year we'd sit down and review the compensation of the salaried

people and we'd call in their immediate supervisor. What do you think about this person, that person?" and so forth. We had a woman who was a sales service manager for a certain number of territories, okay. And she was doing a first class job but she wasn't paid as well as the men. And I remember (unintelligible) to Mr. Greenwood, telling him, he was going to give these men an increase, and I said well now you come to Cecilia, she's doing as good a job as those men we've got down there and I think she's doing a better job than two of them. And I think she should be brought up to the same pay as these men. Well, that wasn't the way he grew up, you know. Well we had quite a go about it and he said "Are you suggesting that in one jump her salary be increased in one shot from where she is not to where we just agreed to move these men up to?" I said, "yes, she's doing the same work."

MN: She was?

GH: Yes, she's doing the same work, she's handling a certain number of territories out in the middle west. You know they each had (unintelligible), we'd split it up, a fair load for everybody. He said, well, I can't see that. But finally I got him, I said, well, how about taking her half way, next year we take her all the way then. But I have always felt strongly no sex discrimination. If the female is doing the same job as the man she gets the same compensation. I feel strongly this way. But see the old management, you know, it wasn't always thought about that way.

MN: What was the rationale behind his objection?

GH: There would be too much of an increase at one time to bring her up.

MN: But she wasn't, she wouldn't have been started on a par with them anyway? Although she was doing the same work?

GH: Well, she came from another part of the office into that job, but she'd been out on the job by then like, I don't know, a couple of years or something, and she was doing a person, not that he had to deal with her very much. I dealt with her more because the sales service department came under the sales department, it was on a different floor in the office, 2nd floor and I was on the third but, he just objected to that in one fell swoop giving her let's say an annual basis an increase of maybe like 30% or something you know, like I don't know, \$2,000 increase starting on January 1st where the other guys got five hundred or something.

MN: Did she eventually get that total?

GH: Yes, the next year she went up.

MN: Were the women's jobs more or less, paid more or less than the men's jobs? Cause it sounds like there were certain jobs for women and certain jobs for men.

GH; No they weren't but we had, the company, I think right after World War II, or toward the end of it, they hired outside people to come in here and install what was called a job evaluation system. And you know, so we had grade one and grade two, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And the top grade (phone rings) for example, one of the top grades would be a machinest, tool and dye maker (inter-uption). We had a job evaluation system kind of like for example, somebody, excuse me (coughs) somebody unloading lumber would be like grade one or two or something.

MN: Depending on what?

GH; Might be grade two. Somebody sweeping the floor might be grade one.

MN: Would that depend on the difficulty of the job?

GH; Well, there were a lot of measurements, the danger, the physical requirements, the skill required to run the machine, the skill, the judgement required, for example, in gluing up panks. First the cut-off saw would cut them all to one size, okay? Say a length like this, like a, like the top of a chest for example, chest of drawers okay. Then you'd have to put them through what were called the matching saws. So this would be a saw table with a moveable guide on it, okay and there'd be a scale on the table, so you're going up to a certain width, but you also got to allow for, you also have to allow for the joints. At one time we were using tonge and groove joints. Eventuaally we went to straight joints, so you'd have to make allowance for that. And you'd select the lumber of a pile here and try and reasonably match the grain. In other words you wouldn't want to have boards that have practically nograin and in the middle have one that the grain stood out like hell, you know, cause when you finish it that's still going to stand out like hell in the middle of it. So put that with other boards that got grain that stand out too. So depending on the judgement and so forth, it was a very fair sys-- fair thing. But then there's certain jobs that you know, you couldn't, we wouldn't expect women to do like truckers you know, where there's quite a bit of physical strength involved. Eventually we went to an electrically powered truck to pick up flats, you know with piles of stock on them. You wouldn't expect them to work on a job like unloading lumber or something that's pretty strong physical work. The days I talk about doing it, we used to get sometimes we'd get a carload of what's called sixteen quarter, that would be four inch lumber, if it was, even if it wasn't air dried those pieces of lumber are hard wood you know, and wood from here to here four inches thick.

BEGINNING TAPE 3, SIDE A

GH; I almost feel like she's a member of the family. I think she feels the same towards me.

MN; Cause you've known her so long?

GH; I've known her for a long time. I see her at the markets once in awhile. She's a very good looking lady for her age too.

MN; She was a foreman?

GH; She was a foreman in the stitching room.

MN; Were there many women foreman?

GH; No, there were not.

MN; What is that?

GH; Because most of the departments were, you know, heavily manned by men. That's one reason. And if they were going to be foremen in the machine department or a sanding department, for example, you know, you've got to know every operation and in some of these departments we had very few or no women. Because, largely because of the physical stamina it took to do some of these jobs. (Looks in the phone book for the name of someone). Well, I think her name is, I'm not positive of this but I think her name is Anna, I don't see a Cora in here, Anna M. Houde (H O U D E) French. 27 Ash Street, 632-5966. Ask her if she was the lady who used to be a forelady at Heywood-Wakefield Company in the stitching room.

MN; Did they call them foreladies?

GH; I think we called them foreladies, yes. Now if she says she isn't, then ask her who the lady is with her, same last name that was in that position.

MN; Okay.

GH; If you can't get it then, call me back, I can call some people and find out. Well we also, see during World War II, Heywood-Wakefield Company, this plant earned 5 Army-Navy E awards. We were at one time approximately 92% of our shipments were war work, both metal and wood. And among other departments we had we had what we called a bomb fuse department where we made fuses for bombs. And we had a big automatic screw machine department, you know where you take the bar steel and you shape it to a certain thing and you take it out

and then there are other operations like little drilling operations and assembly operations had to be done on these. We did not load them, you know with the explosives but they went to loading depots to be loaded. And at that time we had something like 1500 employees in World War II. And then some of these departments they were almost entirely women. But the experience was that women would, that were working there, would accept much more readily the supervision, direction, training and so forth from a man than they would from another woman. Some of these departments we had to man them with men because the women could not take the idea of another woman being over them and telling them what to do.

MN: How did the men feel about it?

GH: And they would accept the men. Well it took a certain kind of a man to take over a department say with a hundred or two hundred women in it. Because it always I don't want to sound prejudicial but you know, a certain amount of pettiness going on, it took a guy with a really good natured disposition to take over the job to be honest with you. One in particular I remember, he's deceased now, this guy, he was just a wonderful person anyway, and he was so diplomatic you know, but he'd get the job done, he was no damn fool, but it took tremendous diplomacy to be a foreman over a department with 100 or so women you know. Cause they get fighting among themselves and all kinds of petty stuff and its too hot and its too cold and I'm in a draft and she keeps going to the ladies room and I'm standing here working and tremendous pettinous in these people.

MN: And you wouldn't find that in the departments with the men?

GH: Beg your pardon?

MN: You wouldn't find that same kind of....

GH: No, sorry to tell you as a woman but that's the way it was.

MN: Kind of disappointed. (laughs)

GH: My youngest daughter works for a software company in Boston, if she were sitting here she'd get on my back for saying such a thing but its the truth. And most of the men, once in awhile, and you know, this thing expanded like crazy and I wasn't here most of the time but I was here towards the end and I heard a lot about it. Some of these men no way would they take over as a foreman of a department with a hundred women in it (laughs).

MN: What department would that have been, with a hundred women?

GH; Bomb fuse assembly department.

MN; Would, if there was a department with a hundred men, would they have accepted a woman foreman?

GH; I doubt it, but I don't know, it never happened. Well, I don't know it never happened. If the woman really had the capabilities possibly they would have but we had very few, we didn't have any departments with as many as a hundred in them, we had smaller units, but ... that bomb fuse thing, they were all sitting at long benches, you know, just one after another, one does this operation, goes to this one does that operation, goes to this one does that operation and that sort of thing.

MN: And that's because the men were in the war so that's why you had the females?

GH; The men were in the war and also this called for ginger dexterity to some extent. But I guess the biggest reason was, where you going to find the men?

MN: Did the women do any of the men's normal men's jobs because you still made furniture in the war, did they do that and then give up those jobs when the men came back?

GH; Yes, there were some that did, I'm sure three must have been some, I can't think of one in particular now. But we had women working there that did some heavy jobs, too. Like all of our, all of our packers were women. You know, packing a triple dresser, that thing, made the way Heywood-Wakefield made them, you're talking about a piece of furniture that weighs 2 or 3 hundred pounds. But we had certain conveyerized the thing up to them and you know we did everything we possible could to make the job easier for them. But that was hard work, hard physical work, packing.

MN; And that wasn't just in the war, that was a normal...

GH; No that was before the war and afterwards and right up until the end, packers.

MN: Why wouldn't you have put men on that job?

GH; I don't know. Women seemed to like the job, they were good at it. There were times when we had men that we could put on there, if we needed, you know, a surge in getting shipments out or something. But I would say that 95% of the time the packers were all women. But that was no easy little job, when you're on your feet all day you know walking around these, bending up these corrugated cartons and you know, everything else. It was quite a job.

MN; And what were the other sort of women jobs in the company?

GH; Well, outside of the office and the clerks jobs and the factory offices, well we had some in the mill room, feeding and taking off from machines. The men would set them up ...

NM; Stitching?

GH; We had very few we had no women in the sanding department, assembly departments ae all men. We had a lot of women in the finishing departments. You know, some of them were sprayers, some sprayers were men. In the stain room, almost, it was we had both men and women. You know you'd take a cse and comes through a conveyor and you spray the stain on, then you slide it off on a roller conveyor and our stain had to be wiped into the wood, going with the grain. That was one of the beauties of our finish that we did this operation, and wiped with clean rags, you if the rag got soaked with the stain you threw it in a pot and then it'd go our and would be washe. That was almost entirely men, but we've had some women spraying. Oh women, upholstery department there was a lot of women and sometimes we'd have women cutters, cutting the fabrics in layers, women stitchers, women doing some small upholstery operations. At all times women would do touch-up on a finished product, you know see a little dent here or something that needed to be taken care of.

MN; Is that a burner-in?

GH; Burner-iner, yes. Ah some hand sanding operations in the finishing were women. For example, after stain was wiped on, go through an oven dry the stain. Next coat was sealer, lacquer sealer, genuine lacquer sealer. Go through an oven dry it, come out it would be all very rough. You'd have to hand sand everything with very fine paper. Hand sand the whole surface of the piece.

MN; Wow, each piece?

GH; Each piece...yes. And the women would do that and then they'd blow the dust off then it'd go back in the line and go through the first coat of, get the first coat of lacquer whatever dust was on the previous coat was lacquer based so it would -- the lacquer would absorb the dust and so forth. (word unintelligible) Women in many many areas I don't feel that there was any discrimination against women in that plant, I really don't. I never hear any complaint about it or rembmer any grievance about it or anything of that kind.

MN; Would if they were working would they get the same piece rate as the men?

GH; Yes, for the same operation they would get the same rate.

MN: And did you notice with the women that they would tend to leave and come back, leave and come back or would they be, stay long term like the man?

GH: Most of them, I'd say most of the women stayed long, stayed long time now if you're asking if a women left to have a child would she come back, I can't remember any specific examples, but ... Most of the women who were there had been there a long time.

MN: So there weren't any big -- I know the textile mills they would often lay people off in summers and hire them back in the fall, you know, when the autumn came.

GH: Well, in the ah, in the wood furniture business there was really no seasonal nature to it. You're apt to ship a little bit more in the fall because that's when the dealers order heavy, the holidays are coming up, not that our items were Christmas items, most of them, most of them weren't, you know, a rocker might be but you know case goods you don't consider, they're too expensive to think of as a Christmas present usually. We would only have layoffs if there was a real recession on (-----dealers stop by???) Our problem, you know you know you hear around here today, the there were more serious problems in the furniture industry, those that are still left here is trying to hire people to work in the plant. It's a terrible problem, you've heard about that problem since you're in here. If Heywood-Wakefield were still going the problem these people in Gardner would have would be monumental compared to what it is now. Cause we were working over 400 people when we closed down. We had been working prior to that up to as high as 800 people.

MN: In the factory?

GH: ---- And we were the first company in town to feel this crunch, of not being able to hire enough people to man the ---. It happened, it started happening in the late

60's (1960's) when all these other companies were having no problem at all so to speak, really. Nichols and Stones, S. Bent. In the early 80's one time we had a backlog down there approaching six million dollars (cannot make out the rest of the sentence.) And our shipments got to be terrible ---. You should ship 6 to 8 weeks at the most, we were 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 weeks ---- hanging on to those orders. To get the retailers to wait that long for a shipment ---.

MN: Would people would quit that's why the---?

GH: No we just we wanted to hire more people.

MN: You couldn't find them?

GH: Couldn't find them. We're probably the first company in town to really feel this pinch crunch on people.

MN: What about recruiting new immigrants?

GH: Ah, I understand that the company did this, you know, before I was born you know from Ireland, perhaps from Canada, I think a lot of people from Canada----- and they came down here anyway. A few came then the others heard what's ----- available and they came down. No we never put on a drive to bring in new immigrants. I suppose if we had not shut down that would be something that we would probably be doing today, you know, within the law, as well as possible within the law. You know there's a problem about that now too. There were times in the 60's and early 70's when we hired help----- could find. It's strange because (both talk at same time and hard to understand)

MN: -----All these people around are very provincial now. There's a furniture company, Winchendon Furniture Company up in Winchendon now. The Heywood-Wakefield factory to the center of Winchendon is about 9 miles, 10 at the very most. That furniture factory burned and folded up and we had a number of people from Winchendon working at the plant and do you think we could get any of those people to come in and work -- they wouldn't do it. Maybe we got one out of a potention of maybe 40 or 50 or something.

MN: Too far?

GH: They just, if they can't get work in Winchendon they were going to draw unemployment comp. And we had good people from Winchendon working for us and they knew some of these people and they did everything possible to get them to come to work for us in Gardner. They wouldn't commute 10 miles. Now look what's happening-- Gardner being filled up with people that work at Digital in Maynard and Marlborough, and everywhere else.

MN: My husband works in Lawrence.

GH: Yeah and they commute. These people wouldn't go ten miles. Occasionally we would pick up someone from Winchendon from that plant who was dissatisfied with his wages or working conditions or didn't like the guy he was (unintelligible) would come down through contacts with people who were working for us and lived in Winchendon. In fact at that first meeting of yours that I went to one guy explained that to me that's how he happened to come to Heywood Wakefield, he worked in Winchendon Furniture, they were just not treating him right, they wouldn't give him a raise and he deserved it and another guy doing the same job getting more money and he knew it. So I says the hell with them that's how I came to Heywood-Wakefield, I started there.

40

MN; But you didn't know that.

GH; I didn't happen to know in his particular case, no. But you know, you couldn't know the case history of everybody there, there were too many. But that was a real problem for us before anybody else around here ever thought it was a problem.

MN; But isn't it odd when you know you constantly read in the paper about the problem of unemployment, etc, etc. Is it that's the labors there but they don't want to work in the furniture or the labor's just not there?

GH; Well, the people that are operating in Gardner today tell me that what they face right now is that number one most of the young people coming in, unlike it was a generation or two or three before are not going to work in the furniture industry because they have much better opportunities you know with Digital or Wang or Raytheon or you name it, whoever they are all around here, you know, hi-tech stuff.

MN; What do you mean, better opportunities?

GH; Better pay, some cases maybe better fringe benefits. I'm not really up on that one but I would guess they probably were. The pay would certainly be much better. Cleaner working conditions in the sense that you don't have any wood dust around and all, that sort of thing. We had very compete blower systems so you know. But there are people who are even despite that they would be allergic to going through our factory, you know, if you had asthma or something you know. They're just better opportunities for them in the high tech business.

MN; Do you think that's true that they really are better opportunities?

GH; Yes, pay wise.

MN; Isn't it the same, piecework or whatever?

GH; I am not, I do not know Martha if they have piecework in the plants like Digital or not. I would doubt it myself. If this company was still going and I was running it today I would be getting away from piecework. Because its an inexact science, I mean you cannot control your wage costs. You still have to time study to get for the time so you could build your costs. I would not, I would not have piecework. It's a very expensive system to maintain. You can imagine that -- you've got to have a rate for every operation, for every piece that goes that goes into every piece of furniture. Any you've got to have a time study department. And you know, it's a tough job out there.

MN; Did it really, did you think it really increased people's productivity or their motivation?

GH; Oh yes, I'm sure in some departments it did. Because, for example, gluing up blanks or, well take that as a prime example, gluing up blanks --

MN; What's a blank?

GH; Gluing up boards to make a blank like a panel like this okay, well. We had (standard?) charts on that okay. So there we could control, we could control our costs and we could control the wages on the job. It's all charted out, depending on the width and length and so forth. And the productivity was very, very high. In fact we had a furniture company one time from the south who was thinking about getting into making a few things out of solid wood instead of veneer, contact us, wanted to come up and see our, how we glued up blanks of solid wood. Cause they didn't know much about it and they were absolutely dumb-founded by the work that involved. They couldn't stick at some of the rates there because no matter what you change in designs, a new group of furniture or something a blank is still a blank. But it's all the other little operations, like sanding this and sanding that and sanding some of this stuff where you get taken. You can't you could not control your wage costs with piecework.

MN; But wasn't that whole incentive system an effort to attract people so they would make more money and keep them.

GH; Well, you'll see S. Bent advertise once in awhile in the Gardner News certain operations, piecework available. Thy's why they put that piecework thing in there. But it unmanageable and very costly to try to do it and you can't do it perfect. Because you're (unintelligible) the guy and he's going to play a game with you.

MN; So you give them a set rate, say they were gluing the blanks together then they would get seven dollars an hour and somebody else would get.

GH; Well, no it would be by the volume they put through the operation. We had piecerates, it was all by peicerate.

MN; No, but I mean it you were to do it now you would not put the piece rates in?

GH; If I was to do it over again, I would seriously consider not doing that. Now Temple Stuart has gotten completely away from it over in Baldwinville. I talked to Fremont Stuart several months ago and he told me they had. Now I work for a consultant in the wood products industry wood furniture and any kind of wood products, you know, And he's out of Ashville, North Carolina and the only piecerates that he knows of in the South today are in upholstered furniture, you know, where you can better control it, the operations. But you know, put in a new chair they're going to set new rates on sanding, some different kinds of sanders, a barrel sander or belt sander and all this kind of stuff. Some of these, the belts, they're going around like this and you're pushing the thing into the belt sander because

it's a bent piece of wood and that's the only way you can do it. You can't put it through a straight bed sander. Well, you know, how hard they push, I mean in time studying they're going to just barely touch the belts, take forever to do this piece. But when you go away, set the rate and go away boy they're right into the belt in good shape. You know, maybe double their money if the time study man was not experienced. And then you're stuck with the rate. One of the, I noticed one of the things you've got on the -- are recording now?

MN; Yeah, do you want me to shut it off?

GH; Yeah, for a minute.

END OF TAPE